Maryland Hi	storical	Trust			
Maryland In	ventory	of Historic P	roperties Form	Survey No. B-	4865
1. Name					
Historic	508 - 512 S	South Port Street			
and / common					
2. Location					
street & number	508 – 512 S	outh Port Street			
city, town	Baltimore				
state & zip code	Maryland	21231	county		
3. Classificat	ion				
Categorydistrict X building(s)structuresiteobject		Ownership public X private both Public Acquisition in process being considered not applicable	Status X occupiedunoccupiedwork in progress Accessible X yes: restrictedyes: unrestrictedno	Present Useagriculturecommercialeducationalentertainmentgovernmentindustrialmilitary	museumpark X private residencereligiousscientifictransportationother:
4. Owner of l	Propert	<u>y</u>			
name					
street & number				teleph	none
city, town			state & zi	o code	
5. Location o	f Legal	Description			5) (f
courthouse, registry of de	eeds, etc. Balt	imore City Land Records			liber
street & number	Cla	arence Mitchell Courthouse			folio
city, town Baltimore			State N	/aryland	
793	ation in	Existing Histo	orical Surveys		
title					

federal

depository for survey records

city, town

county

local

state

state & zip code

Maryland Historical Trust Aaryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4865

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Condition		Check One	Check One
excellent _x good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered X altered	X original sitemoved: date of move:

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of three two-bay-wide, two-story brick houses with low-pitched gable roofs are typical of the small alley houses built in Baltimore in the 1850s and 1860s, often along especially narrow secondary alley streets running perpendicularly off the main "alley" street. This group was built in 1870, at the very end of the period in which houses in this style were built. In many cases, alley houses such as these are still occupied by working class families and many are still covered with the formstone put on in the 1950s or 1960s.

The houses are two stories in height, 13' wide, and occupy lots 74'6" deep. Each two-room-deep house has a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. The pitch of the gable roof is especially low, a characteristic of this particular type of two-story, gable-roofed alley house. The houses are probably constructed in common bond, but all of the facades are now covered with formstone. Originally each house had a simple brick corbelled cornice, but all are now obscured by the stucco and formstone. Chimneys are located at the rear end of the kitchen addition.

The original door and window openings have been completely obscured by the formstone coverings and all windows are filled with replacement 1/1 sash. No original doors survive and the row shows a mix of replacement door styles, all surmounted by a single light transom. The houses have no basements, the entrances being reached directly from the street.

The houses are basically two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace. The one-story rear addition served as the kitchen, with its own cooking fireplace.

Maryland	Historical	Trust		
Maryland	Inventory	of Historic	Properties	Form

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Builder/Architect Werner Knobel

8. Significance

Specific dates 1870 - 1871

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify		
prehistoric 1400-1499 1500-1599 1600-1699 1700-1799 X 1800-1899 1900	archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce communications	X community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration industry invention	landscape architecturelawliteraturemilitarymusicphilosophypolitics/government	religion science sculpture X social/ humanitarian theatre transportation other: specify

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

These houses are significant as being representative of a surviving group of extremely modest two-story, gable-roofed houses built in Fells Point in the 1850s and 1860s to serve as inexpensive housing for the influx of newly arrived immigrant families seeking work in harbor-related activities or in the first small factories being built at this time. Most of these houses were located along narrow alley streets, or along even narrower courts. In terms of design, the houses are basically the descendants of earlier Federal-style working class housing built in the early decades of the century, but without the usual dormer story of such houses. Because there is no dormer story the roof slope is much less steep in these later versions of the style. The houses are surprisingly large for the type, with a main house consisting of two small rooms on each floor, with a centrally located, tightly winding, narrow staircase, and a rear kitchen addition.

The houses were built according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the period 1870 to 1910. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and northeast of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell for \$1,200 to \$1,500; small street houses for \$700 - \$900. In this case the builder was responsible for these old-fashioned houses on the west side of Port St. and also for the more stylish early Italianate-style houses on the north side of Fleet St.

The land originally belonged to the Patterson family as part of their 18th century estate, which also included the land given by the family to the city for Patterson Park. In the late 1860s the Patterson heirs began developing this block by leasing parcels to various builders who constructed modestly scaled and priced housing for the mainly German immigrant families who were settling near the port-related fledgling industries of Canton. Most of the houses, including these three, sold to mainly German-American semi-skilled tradesmen and laborers employed in nearby factories, who received mortgages from a variety of local building and loans, many of them sponsored by the German community.

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Survey No. B-4865

9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

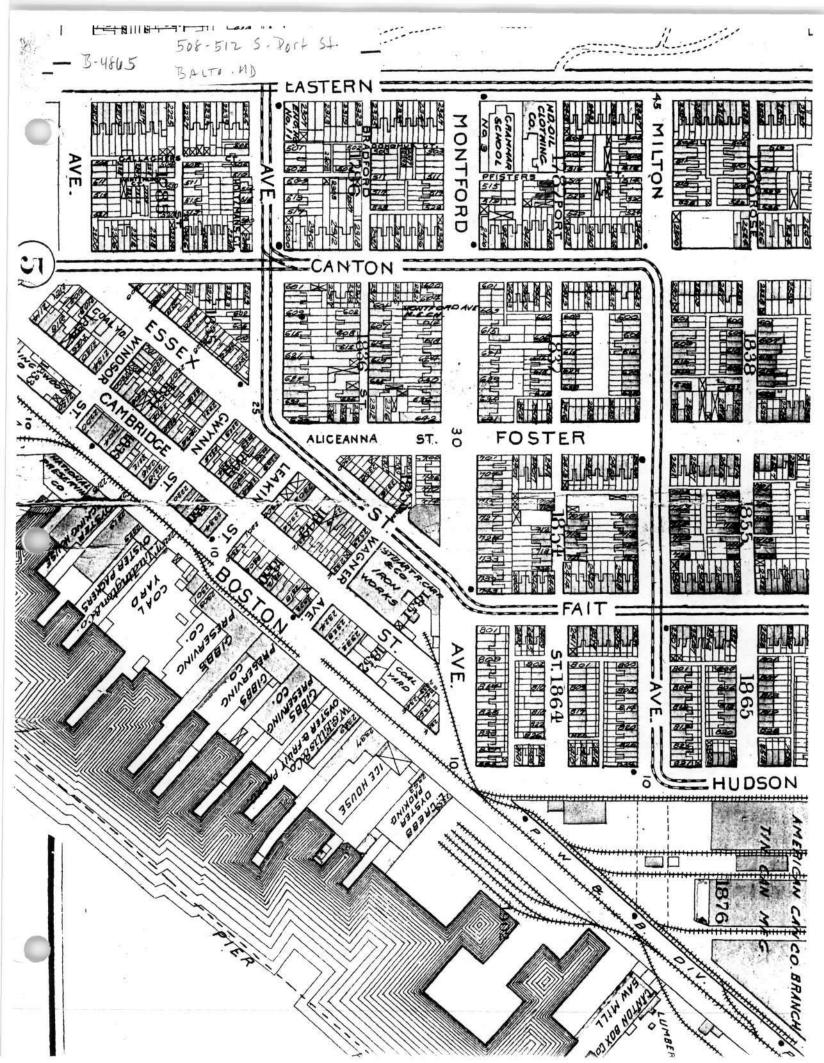
11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward	
Organization The Alley House Project	date
street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.	telephone
city, town Baltimore	state & zip code Maryland 21204

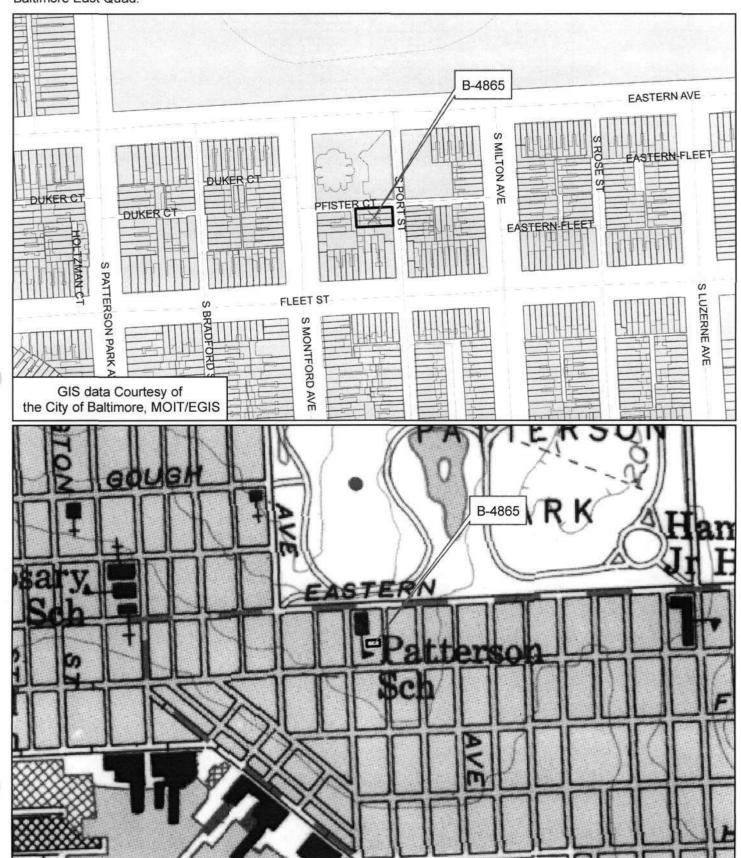
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of N Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property

Return to: DHCP/DHCD Maryland Historical Trust 100 Community Place Crownsville MD 21032-2023



B-4865 508-512 S. Port Street Block 1787 Lots 051-053 Baltimore City Baltimore East Quad.





508-512 S PONT 508-512 S. PORT St.

FP12 BALTO, MD

C. Belfoure

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